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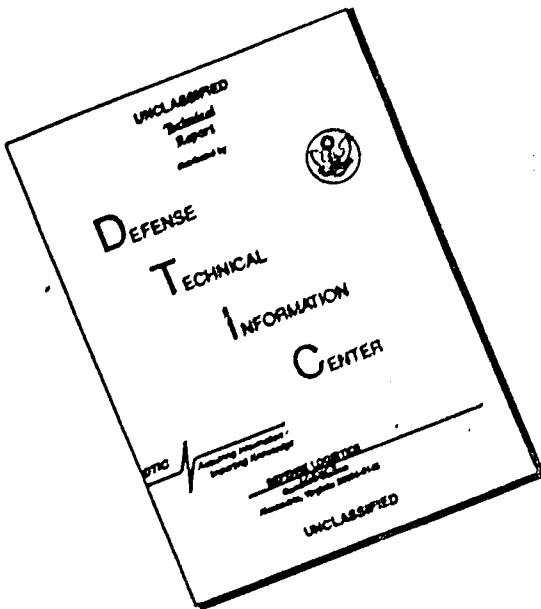
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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AGAM-P (M) (9 Jan 69)

FOR OT-IT-683132

15 January 1969

(19)

(12) 62p.

SUBJECT: Operational Report (6) Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 109th Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 December 1968
(4)-8

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 1b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSEFOR OF US, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.
3. To insure that the information provided through the Lessons Learned Program is readily available on a continuous basis, a cumulative Lessons Learned Index containing alphabetical listings of items appearing in the reports is compiled and distributed periodically. Recipients of the attached report are encouraged to recommend items from it for inclusion in the Index by completing and returning the self-addressed form provided at the end of this report.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Operational rep. for quarterly period
ending 31 Dec 68. Kenneth G. Wickham

1 Incl
as

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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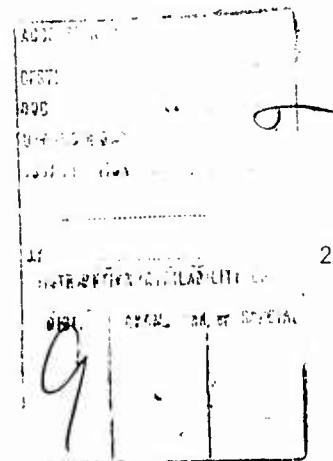
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ARMED FORCES OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 269TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO 96353
"DISCIPLINED PROFESSIONALS"

AVIGC-R-SC

1 August 1968

Subject: Operations Report of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion
For the Period Ending 31 July 1968

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. SECTION 1. Operations: Significant Activities.

a. (c) Chronology of Significant Events.

(1) The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, composed of two assault helicopter companies, one aviation company (aerial weapons) and one assault support helicopter company at the onset of this report, has decreased in size to its present composition of two assault companies and one assault support helicopter company. Since the termination of the last report the 361st Aviation Company (Aerial Weapons), formerly assigned to Di An, and under the control of the 269th for training, has been reassigned to the 17th Combat Aviation Group. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters, the 116th Assault Helicopter Company and the 242nd Assault Support Helicopter Company remain at Cu Chi, Republic of Vietnam, and the 187th Assault Helicopter Company continues its support from Tay Ninh.

(2) During this quarter the 269th continued to demonstrate the capability of improving and increasing the airmobile support required by allied forces within the III Corps Tactical Zone. The 269th continued its primary support to the 25th Infantry Division in its operations against

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VC/NVA forces located in the 25th Division's area of operations. The 269th supported the 25th Division in its constant offensive actions in the Cu Chi-Saigon area during the VC/NVA forces' ill-fated May Offensive. The 266th, also supporting the 25th Division, the 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division and other allied units within the III Corps Tactical Area, flew 157 combat assault operations and accounted for 125 confirmed enemy killed. The officers and men of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion through their skill and determination have provided support for the 25th Infantry Division and other allied units with the necessary aviation support to thwart another determined drive by the VC/NVA forces during May 1968.

(3) The 116th and 187th Assault Helicopter Companies continue as primary aviation support for the 25th Infantry Division; however, tactical situations required their use outside the Division AO. Both assault companies conducted operations in support of the 9th Infantry Division, 199th Light Infantry Brigade, ARVN Forces, and personnel from Civilian Irregular Defense Groups.

(4) Each of the airmobile companies has assigned one UH-1C Smoke Ship. This ship's employment, which is limited only by the imagination, continues to save countless injuries and damage to aircraft in the landing zones.

(5) The 242nd Assault Support Helicopter Company continued its high level of effective support for allied forces in the III Corps Tactical Zone. The 242nd was utilized primarily in support of the 25th Infantry

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Division and daily carried the heavy cargo lifts needed for the troops in the field. A daily commitment of from 3 to 7 aircraft in support of units in the III Corps Tactical Zone has kept the 242nd above the programmed flight time.

(6) During the period 1 May to 31 July 1968, the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion persisted in its aggressive spirit carrying the flight. The efforts expended by all members of this command are effected by the outstanding reputation enjoyed by this Battalion. The statistics listed below are indicative of the support rendered by the 269th to all units within the III Corps Tactical Zone.

(7) From 1 May to 31 July 1968, the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion flew 62,594 sorties, logging a total of 19,280 flying hours. 129, 171 passengers were carried and 17,801 tons of cargo were hauled in support of ground forces. Aircraft of this Battalion killed 125 Viet Cong and 116 casualties were evacuated from forward battle areas.

(8) During this period, the Battalion suffered 9 KIA and 38 WIA. Enemy ground fire damaged 111 aircraft. Most of the hostile fire was received during combat assaults.

(9) Aircraft status as of 31 July 1968 (Inclosure 4).

(10) The figures shown are evidence that the 269th is supporting some of the most active forces in Vietnam today. The Battalion takes pride and satisfaction in the support it has been able to provide for the aviation minded ground units in the III Corps Tactical Zone. A further statistical account is in Inclosure 5.

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b. (U) Command

(1) Mission: The primary mission of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters is to provide command, control, staff planning and supervision for its assigned aviation units. The mission of the subordinate assault helicopter companies is the airlifting of troops in mobile operations. The mission of the Battalion's assault support helicopter company is logistical and tactical airlift of troops, supplies and equipment. There has been no change in the Battalion missions during this reporting period.

(2) Organization: The Battalion is presently composed of a headquarters and headquarters company, two assault helicopter companies and one assault support helicopter company. The 361st Aviation Company (Aerial Escort) attached to the Battalion for in-country training was detached and relocated to II Corps on 27 May 1968. Present organizational chart is included in Inclosure 1.

(3) Personalities:

(a) Commander: At the close of this reporting period the Battalion Commander is Lieutenant Colonel DELYLE G. REDMOND, 064450, Infantry.

(b) Staff: At the close of this reporting period the principal staff officers are:

1. Executive Officer: Lieutenant Colonel LONNIE T. HOWARD, 097922, Infantry.

2. S-1: Major WILLIAM F. OSTERMEIER, 0F102582, Armor

3. S-2: Major ROY H. HERRON, 083921, Artillery

COMMAND

4. S-3: Major ALBERT R. WOODRUFF, 073431, Artillery
5. S-4: Major ROSWELL MOORE, JR, 04039033, Transportation Corps.

(c) Unit Commanders: At the close of the reporting period the unit commanders of the subordinate units are:

1. Headquarters Company: Captain JOSEPH T. MILLER, 05329389, Ordnance Corps.
2. 116th Assault Helicopter Company: Major GERRY D. MARTIN, OF105475, Armor.
3. 187th Assault Helicopter Company: Major RUSSELL J. FOLIA, 077391, Infantry.
4. 242nd Assault Support Helicopter Company: Major CLARENCE H. KEVILLE, 088767, Transportation Corps.

(4) Personnel Changes within the command group and principal staff:

- (a) Battalion Commander - Effective 12 July 1968.
 1. Outgoing: LTC EDGAR F. TODD, OF105845, Artillery
 2. Incoming: LTC DELYLE G. REDMOND, 064450, Infantry
- (b) S2 - Effective 24 July 1968.
 1. Outgoing: CPT BILLY F. DAVIS, 05321762, Infantry
 2. Incoming: MAJ ROY H. HERRON, 083921, Artillery
- (c) S3 - Effective 8 July 1968.
 1. Outgoing: MAJ RICHARD W. AUTH, 04032744, Corps of Engineers.
 2. Incoming: MAJ ALBERT R. WOODRUFF, 073431, Artillery

COMMAND

(d) S4 - Effective 25 June 1968.

1. Outgoing: MAJ JOSEPH A. SILES, 04004905, Corps of Engineers.
2. Incoming: MAJ ROSWELL MOORE JR, 04039033, Transportation Corps.

(e) 116th Assault Helicopter Company - Effective 8 July 1968.

1. Outgoing: MAJ ALBERT R. WOODRUFF, 073431, Artillery
2. Incoming: MAJ GERRY D. MARTIN, 0F105475, Armor

(f) 242nd Assault Support Helicopter Company - Effective

21 May 1968.

1. Outgoing: MAJ ANDREW N. ALFORD, 019399776, Infantry
2. Incoming: MAJ CLARENCE H. KEVILLE, 088767, Transportation Corps.

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c. (C) Personnel and Administration.

(1) Maintenance of Unit Strength:

(a) Battalion strength as of 31 July 68: (See Inclosure 2).

(b) Summary of projected gains and losses for the next 90 days: (See Inclosure 3).

(c) Personnel Reports. Personnel Reports are submitted in accordance with 269th CAB Regulation 335-1.

(d) Replacements. Replacements have been requisitioned in accordance with USARV Regulation 614-185 for officer personnel (8 months prior to DEROS for non-aviators and 11 months prior to DEROS for aviators); and USARV Regulation 614-202 for enlisted personnel (8 months prior to DEROS for Senior Enlisted personnel and 6 months prior to DEROS for grades E1 - E6 personnel).

(e) Reenlistment Program:

1. There were 5 reenlistments during the quarter.

2. The reenlistment program is publicized in the Battalion Newspaper "Black Baron Release".

(2) Personnel Management:

(a) Personnel Procedures:

1. Assignments: Personnel assigned during the quarter were as follows:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
20	41	217

2. Rotation to CONUS during the quarter:

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<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
14	46	223

3 Casualties during the quarter:

a Return to Duty:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
2	8	13

b Evacuated from Combat Zone:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
0	4	11

c Killed in Action:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
1	3	5

4 Promotions: Promotions during the quarter were as follows:

<u>OFFICERS</u>					
<u>LTC</u>	<u>MAJ</u>	<u>CPT</u>	<u>1LT</u>	<u>2LT</u>	<u>CW</u>
2	4	6	0	0	27

<u>ENLISTED</u>					
<u>E-9</u>	<u>E-8</u>	<u>E-7</u>	<u>E-6</u>	<u>E-5</u>	<u>E-4</u>
0	0	0	2	86	106

5 Reclassification: Administrative MOS Reclassification during the quarter - 227.

6 (a) Retirement/Reversion to retired status: 0.

.. (b) Prisoners of War: Prisoners of war are turned over to the G-2, 25th Infantry Division for collection, safeguarding, processing and evaluation.

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(c) Civilian personnel: Civilian personnel are hired from the abundant resources of indigenous personnel from local areas. Local nationals are employed in two categories: Permanent and Daily Hires.

1 Permanent Hire: Each unit, submitting its current and projected civilian personnel requirements in accordance with USARV Regulation 690-7, through this headquarters to 12th Combat Aviation Group, is authorized to employ local nationals on a permanent basis. Permanent hire personnel are allocated from USARV thru 12th Combat Aviation Group to this organization, and the authorized personnel are paid bi-weekly from funds distributed directly to each unit from USARV. This battalion has been authorized additional permanent hire personnel as a result of "Program 6" Civilianization. This program deleted the authorized military space and authorized a local national to be hired in this vacated space. The following spaces were allocated to this battalion in support of "Program 6" Civilianization:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF PERMANENT HIRES EMPLOYED</u>
116th Aslt Hel Co	91A10	1
187th Aslt Hel Co	91A10	1
242nd Aslt Spt Hel Co	94B20	1
	93B20	1
	67A10	<u>1</u>
TOTAL		5

It is felt that this program hampers the operation of the unit primarily due to the MOS and the duty associated. Civilian cooks are present for

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for duty during the preparation of the unit will only; therefore, it would be more beneficial to the unit to hire additional civilian kitchen police personnel rather than cooks. Also, it is not very prudent to hire and utilize civilian personnel in the 67410 RCS due to the critical work involved in helicopter repair. Additional civilian personnel allocated assist the unit in accomplishing the assigned mission if these personnel are utilized in a position that would free military to concentrate on their primary work. The authorization of additional kitchen police, carpenters, sanitation personnel, and handymen would be very beneficial to this unit. In addition to the "Program 6" personnel, the following permanent hires are employed:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
HHC, 269th CAB	Kitchen Police	5
	Administration Ass't	1
	Maint Mech	1
116th Aslt Hel Co	Kitchen Police	9
187th Aslt Hel Co	Kitchen Police	8
242nd Aslt Spt Hel Co	Kitchen Police	7
	Clerk Typist	<u>1</u>
TOTAL		32

2 Daily Hires: Daily Hires are employed daily as needed and perform functions such as filling sandbags, digging drainage ditches, and general police. Funds are allocated monthly from 12th Combat Aviation Group. Wages paid vary from 80 to 100 \$VN per 8 hour

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work day; however, it has been proven that more production is yielded if sand bagging personnel are paid by a piece rate pay schedule. Local agreement requires one Vietnamese supervisor to be employed for each twenty Vietnamese laborers employed.

(3) Morale and Personnel Services.

(a) Leaves during the quarter were as follows:

	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
Emergency	0	2	11
Compasionate	0	0	0
Special	1	0	22
Ordinary	0	1	28

(b) R&R for the quarter. Forecast/Requested: R&R's are no longer requested by this organization but are given to the battalion by 12th Group on the basis of unit strength. During the quarter the Battalion received 204 R&R quotas.

(c) Character Guidance: The Battalion Chaplain conducts a class on the monthly topic whenever the companies request such class be held through the S-3. Each month a supplemental Orientation Sheet is prepared by the Chaplain and distributed in sufficient numbers to the unit training officers for officers, NCO's and all enlisted personnel not able to attend the class.

(d) Postal Services: The postal services have continued to be excellent. Therby greatly assisting in the upkeep of morale within the Battalion.

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(e) Religious Services: Religious services of the three major faiths are available to all personnel within the command. Denominational Services are also available to certain Protestant personnel.

1 Services for Catholic personnel are provided by Chaplains from adjacent units. Catholics in HHC 269th, 242nd ASHC and 116th AHC attend Mass in the 2nd Brigade Chapel at 0830 hours or in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel at 1030 and 1900 hours on Sundays. There are several other Masses held in the various chapels at Cu Chi Base Camp. Masses are held at 0900 and 1400 hours in the Memorial Chapel at Tay Ninh and are attended by Catholic personnel of the 187th AHC.

2 Jewish personnel in the units located at Cu Chi Base Camp may attend services in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel on Fridays at 1900 hours and Saturdays at 0900 hours. Special arrangements are made for all Jewish personnel to attend days of special obligation such as Passover.

3 The Battalion Chaplain conducts Protestant Worship for the units as follows:

242nd ASHC	0900 hours on Sundays in the Company Dayroom
HHC 269th C.A.	1100 hours on Sundays in the Conference Room
187th AHC	1930 hours on Sundays in the Company Briefing Room

Personnel of the 116th AHC attend services at the 25th Division Memorial Chapel at 0830 hours on Sundays, or may attend with HHC 269th.

4 Protestant denominational services available are:

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a Episcopal Services are held at 0845 hours on Sundays at the Div Arty Chapel for personnel at Cu Chi; at 1000 hours in the Memorial Chapel at Tay Ninh.

b Lutheran Worship is conducted at 1300 hours on Sundays in the 25th DISCOM Chapel at Cu Chi.

c The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints holds services at Cu Chi; 1300 hours - Priesthood and 1400 hours - Sacrement in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel. LDS Services in Tay Ninh are at 1800 hours in Memorial Chapel.

5 Memorial Services are held for all personnel who lose their lives while in the command. These services are usually conducted by the Battalion Chaplain and are held either in the company area or the nearest available chapel.

(4) Discipline Law and Order.

(a) During the past quarter there were no cases tried by General Court Martial.

(b) There have been five cases tried by Special Court Martial

(c) There have been two cases tried by Summary Court Martial.

(d) There has been no cases of confinement which was suspended.

(5) Headquarters Management.

(a) Message Center and Courier Operations. The Battalion operates a message center which is the nerve center of all distribution from and between our companies and higher headquarters. To assist the

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Message Center and to provide the Battalion with the much needed ability to transport personnel of the Battalion between their units, the Battalion maintains a daily courier aircraft, utilizing a UH-1 helicopter. Its normal schedule is 0800 to 1700 hours daily. Its route of flight includes two stops daily at 12th Combat Aviation Group and at each of our subordinate units, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

(b) Administrative Support. There has been quite an improvement in the regularity of receipt of regulations and blank forms. We are still in need of specific regulations, but constant checking and rechecking of requisitions has alleviated most of the problems.

(c) During the quarter the Battalion has not experienced any reproduction problems.

(6) Miscellaneous.

(a) There have been no motor vehicle accidents during the quarter, and only minor damage has been suffered as a result of enemy mortar and rocket fire.

(b) General Education Development: Adequate and effective educational facilities exist at base camps which are occupied by units of this Battalion.

(c) Visitors: This past quarter was marked by numerous visitors most of whom were receiving their in-country orientation.

(d) Marriage to Foreign Nationals: There were no marriages to foreign nationals during the past quarter.

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(e) Ceremonies: On 8 July an Awards Ceremony was conducted and LTC EDGAR F. TODD made the presentations. LTC DELYLE G. REDMOND assumed command of the Black Barons on 12 July 1968. On hand for the Change of Command Ceremony was the Commanding Officers of the following units: 12th Combat Aviation Group, 3rd Brigade, 101st Air Cav Div, and the Commanding General of the 25th Infantry Division.

(f) Exchange Facilities: The PX facilities are adequate but lacking many essential supplies. PX stocks have improved during the latter part of the quarter.

(g) Club and Messes: Effective 31 July 1968, the clubs of this Battalion ceased to operate as Sundry Funds and were annexed by the 25th Infantry Division Open Mess System.

(7) Information.

(a) Command Information: The Command Information Program of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion is being conducted very effectively. Dissemination of Command Information Material is accomplished by the Message Center and the facilities available to it. Material received from Higher Headquarters is broken down proportionately into unit distribution. Pertinent material from higher headquarters is extracted from the fact sheets and reproduced by the Message Center in a Weekly Bulletin which is used to supplement the various sections of the Battalion. At unit level, the Command Information topics are given in several ways: through formation briefings, bulletin board postings, and throughout the units by the Battalion Newspaper, the BLACK BARON RELEASE. Under the tactical

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situation here in Vietnam, it has been difficult to conduct regular classes on Command Information. The most effective system is the one presently employed.

(b) Public Information. The Public Information Program is organized to give maximum coverage to the units of the Battalion and strives to increase public knowledge of the roles performed by the individual soldier. Daily aviation summaries are phoned into USARV IO. The USARV IO in turn publishes a daily news report that is distributed to several large newspaper syndicates.

1 The Aviation summary often incorporates stories on individual feats as well as the unit accomplishments. The results have proven effective with considerable coverage being given to the BLACK BARONS. There are several papers published throughout the chain of command. Stories of a feature type or the immediate news release stories are written to include name of the unit and the individuals home town, and are forwarded to three separate sources published on a bi-weekly basis. The paper has been given a change in format where greater emphasis is placed upon items of local interest, current news releases, Command Information, Editorials and a Chaplain's section for the purpose of Character Guidance.

2 Because the Information Field is extremely competitive, timely and accurate news releases must be made a standard practice. In the publications of Aviation releases, emphasis is placed on giving credit to the important role Aviation plays in support of the Infantry

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Divisions. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion has greatly increased its photographic capabilities by the purchase of new camera equipment. With this new equipment we can give greater coverage to our companies and men by providing better publicity and giving a truer picture of the Aviation role in Vietnam.

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d. (U) Intelligence and Security.

(1) Production of Intelligence.

(a) Timely information for the production of intelligence continues to be the priority mission of the intelligence section. Late information from collection agencies is valuable in establishing trends; however, does not assist the air mission commander in avoiding known enemy activity. Habitual support of the 25th Infantry Division (US) has contributed more than any one factor toward keeping crews current on the enemy situation. Close liaison between the Battalion Intelligence section and the 25th Infantry Division Order of Battle Section and G-2 Operations provides the bulk of current intelligence. When information for a specific area is needed quickly, we have found the best source to be the 3/17th Air Cav Sqdn. Their up-to-date information is invaluable.

(b) May 1968 brought about a first. Trained aerial observers were placed aboard CH-47's. O-1 aircraft for observation were not available in the AO; therefore to continue use of aerial observers, they boarded resupply aircraft. This provided good general observation along resupply routes. Information was not as good as it would have been had the O-1 been used but was better than none at all.

(2) Enemy capabilities, vulnerabilities, and likely courses of action.

(a) There continues to be a vast misunderstanding on the definition of a secure landing zone (LZ). Our aircraft, particularly CH-47's on resupply missions receive entirely too many hits from small arms while on the ground in LZ's. Ground Commanders fail to clear

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landing zones of enemy personnel or continually occupy too small an LZ. This area is receiving command attention.

(b) Continued use of the B-40 and B-41 rocket propelled grenades (RPG) has caused a chain link fence to be constructed around the CH-47 parking area. This fence is approximately twenty five (25) feet high detonates or disarms RPG's prior to their hitting parked aircraft. The RPG is a direct fire, flat trajectory weapon; therefore the twenty five foot high fence is sufficient.

c. (U) Operations and Training.

(1) Operations.

(a) Operations Plans and Orders. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion continually utilizes the standard five part high field order to disseminate plans and orders and insure completeness and clarity for all Battalion controlled operations. Through the use of standardized annexes and distribution systems, OPORDS are prepared and issued in as little time as one hour. The habitual use of verbal warning and first orders, followed by complete written orders, greatly simplifies the conduct of any Battalion operation. The integration of non-organic aviation elements into Battalion operations has posed no problems in staff planning and transmission of orders. The continued use of 1st Avn Bde standard checklists has insured the closest coordination of all participating units.

(b) Supervision and Coordination of Tactical Operations.

In addition to normal command and control functions, the 269th employs a permanent Battalion Operations Center (BOC) and a Command Control Helicopter to assist the commander in control and coordination of all aviation support rendered by the Battalion. The Battalion Commander flies the C&C helicopter with one of his staff members to supervise the execution of combat assault operations. The C&C helicopter is equipped with the AN/ASC-10 command radio console which provides the extra radio channels necessary for coordination of both ground and aviation elements. The supported infantry unit commander and his staff ride in the passenger

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ger compartment of the C&C helicopter. This arrangement of supported and supporting unit commanders with the associated communications networks assures rapid coordination of all activities regardless of the changes in the tactical situation. The Aviation Battalion Commander utilizes the C&C helicopter to observe and control as necessary company size operations.

(c) Battalion Operations Center (BOC). The BOC operates 24 hours daily and is staffed at a minimum with one duty officer and one duty ~~clerk~~. The BOC is the hub of the Battalion operations activity and monitors and coordinates widely separated actions. Within the BOC are the communications networks which links together the Battalion and each subordinate company; the Assistant Division Aviation Officer, 25th Infantry Division; the Army Aviation Element, II FFV Tactical Operations Center and the 12th Combat Aviation Group. BOC receives mission assignments from higher headquarters and passes these assignments to subordinate units as required. BOC personnel constantly monitor company operations and take necessary actions to coordinate activities, react to emergencies and receive and forward reports.

(d) Alternate C&C. In order to insure continued continuity in command and coordination an alternate C&C is employed in all Battalion operations. The alternate C&C monitors the conduct of the operation and becomes airborne with the primary C&C in sufficient time to be completely briefed prior to the primary C&C leaving station. In company

OPERATIONS & FIELD

controlled operations, the sun plot or electronic is utilized for the alternate C&C.

(o) Pathfinder Support. Pathfinder units have continued to support both Battalion and company assault operations. They are utilized to organize pick-up zones for airmobile assault. Maintain constant liaison between ground elements in the PZ and the Air Landing Commander. Pathfinders are normally inserted in the PZ area one hour prior to pick-up time to provide adequate time for the organization of loads and briefings of ground unit personnel. Pathfinders are also utilized in forward areas to organize landing zones for night extractions. The Pathfinders arrive at the landing area just prior to darkness and following a reconnaissance, establish the actual landing zone by emplacing lights for each aircraft touchdown point.

(2) Training.

(a) General: The Battalion has continued normal training of all personnel in basic MDS skills through a concentrated on-the-job training program administered at the company level. Individual replacement training and Vietnam orientation has been accomplished in conjunction with the 25th Infantry Division replacement training center. In this center, all assigned EM receive the required orientation skills such as CEN refresher, Geneva Convention, etc and they also have the additional opportunity to participate in the division's counterintelligence, booby trap and tunnel school.

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(b) Specialized Training.

1 Jungle Environmental Survival. Eight allocations were received for this course given by the U.S. Air Force and Navy in the Phillipinos. These quotas were given to subordinate units as follows: 116th AHC-2; 187th AHC-3; and 242nd ASHC-3.

2 Army Aviation Maintenance Training Assistance Program (AMTAP). Five UH-1 airframe, four CH-47 airframe, one OH-6 airframe, six engine and two technical supply AMTAP quotas were received by the Battalion during the past quarter. These quotas were given to subordinate units as follows:

116th AHC: 2 UH-1 Airframe, 2-Engine, 2-Tech Suppl.

187th AHC: 3 UH-1 Airframe, 1-Engine.

242nd ASHC: 4 CH-47 Airframe, 1-OH6 Airframe,
3-Engine.

3 Decca Maintenance and Operation: A technical representative of the Decca Corporation visited the Battalion for approximately 20 days during the quarter. During this time he assisted subordinate units in Decca Systems maintenance, calibration and operational procedures.

4 Branch Training: During this past quarter two officers of the 116th AHC received infantry branch training with combat units of the 25th Infantry Division. Each officer spent a week on combat operations with the Infantry. These officers are in command positions in the 116th Armed Helicopter Platoon and underwent the training to

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better understand the infantry operations and thereby provide better armed helicopter support. The Pathfinder Detachment C platoon from HHC 269th attended two weeks infantry operations with the Special Forces A-351 and A-352 teams in the vicinity of Camp Leake. This training was conducted to gain a better understanding of infantry and Special Forces operations.

(c) Aviater Training and Standardization

1 Primary training and infantry orientation of newly assigned aviators is given at company level by unit instructor pilots. Each aviator is required to demonstrate to an instructor pilot satisfactory performance on both general support and combat assault type missions prior to being released for mission flying. Initial check rides include all emergency procedures as well as normal operations. The Battalion Headquarters monitors this training and assists the companies by providing the Battalion standardization instructor pilot to inspect the units as required.

2 Standardization is maintained throughout the Battalion through the 90 day standardization check ride system. These check rides are given by the Battalion and Unit Instructor Pilots who insure adherence to the Battalion flight policies. Both normal and emergency procedures are observed during the flight. The Battalion standardization pilots closely monitor this program with an aggressive policy of frequent flying with subordinate units.

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f. (C) Logistics.

(1) Troop Movement: The 361st Helicopter Company (Aerial Weapons) was moved to another area of operations, PCS, and left the command of this Battalion. Alert orders were given in sufficient time to make adequate preparation and alert the proper agencies as to the fact that there would be a move. Final destination was known so an inspection could be made of the facilities available to the unit upon arrival. Most post, camp, and station property remained behind because the new station had much of this equipment available. All personnel and equipment, less helicopters, were moved by air. This required thirty-four C-130's and seven C-124's. Although the movement got off to a slow start because the planned daily sorties did not materialize, the move was completed one day ahead of the scheduled closing date. This was accomplished successfully to a large degree because the warning order was timely, final destination was known, and proper coordination affected with the agencies concerned.

(2) Command Maintenance Management Inspection: During this period, the 1st Aviation Brigade conducted CMMI's on two units of this command. One unit was satisfactory and the other unit was unsatisfactory.

(3) Command Controlled Items: NOMEX flight units and NOMEX flight gloves are still under regulated distribution, however, issues have been made to all units of this command to bring them up to near authorized allowances. Ballistic helmets and aircrewman body armor continue to be in critical short supply. There is one unit which has

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been in-country one year and has not been adequately used in the field sites.

(4) Services: Engineer construction of fuel storage, movements, and parking areas for the 116th ASB at Phu Cat, Phu Cat, Vietnam, and construction directives published, and work has been suspended since April 1968 at Cu Chi. Only a small portion of earthworks have been accomplished to date because the Engineers were assigned to higher priority project at the MSA's. It has been four months now since Maj Eng 116th ASB has been placed on the 116th. Letter requests for cancellation have been submitted to reinstate the original high priority given to the project under minimum essential requirements. It is expected that action will be taken by higher headquarters, but thus far nothing has been accomplished.

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g. (U) Signal.

(1) Communication Installation and Operations.

(a) FM Radio.

1 The following internal radio nets are operated by the Battalion:
a Battalion Command Net: This net is established between the BOC (NCS) and all subordinate aviation companies. The net is operational 24 hours daily. Aircraft radios will net with the Battalion FM Net.

b Battalion Courier Net: This net is established between the Pathfinders, who control the courier, and the daily courier. The net is used for the sole purpose of controlling the courier aircraft.

2 The Battalion operates in the following external nets:

a 12th Combat Aviation Group FM Net: This net is used to pass command and administrative traffic. Key personnel can enter the net, via aircraft radio, when operating away from the respective headquarters. The operating hours are controlled by 12th Group (NCS).

b II Field Forces-AE Secure Operation Net: This net is established utilizing the KY-8, an encryptive machine, to allow classified traffic to be passed. This secure net has provided invaluable results, however may maintenance problems have developed with the equipment installed in this net. Very often problems were corrected without determining the cause of the trouble. The RT 524 unit provides the best service when operating the 50 MC band width in lieu of the 100 MC band width as prescribed in the Field Manual.

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(c) 25th Infantry Division Command Net: This net is used to monitor the Division actions and to provide tactical information.

(b) AM Radio Net: UHF Battalion Command Net: The Battalion Operations Center and Battalion Command and Control Aircraft operate in this net. The net is used primarily as the Battalion Command Net during Battalion Airmobile Operations. To preclude the excessive noise generated by the VRC-24, an aircraft UHF radio has been installed in the BOC. The VRC-24 is maintained for back up and any contingency plans in which the Battalion may become involved.

(c) RTT: The Battalion has two AN/MRC-19 mobile communications radios. Personnel assigned the Battalion Communication section operate and enter the 12th Combat Aviation Group administrative and logistics net as directed by 12th Group (NCS). Secure teletype message can be transmitted. The doublet antenna provides the best results for this radio. In-country maintenance facilities for those radios are almost non-existent and long deadline periods can be expected if maintenance problems develop.

(d) One land line teletype circuit is installed between the communication centers at 12th Group and Battalion. The circuit operates at maximum efficiency experiencing minimum outage. The communication center is operational 24 hours daily. The Group communication center will, providing traffic flow is low, patch one battalion communication

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with another, thus establishing a direct circuit. This system has proven to be very helpful.

(e) Telephone Communications:

1 A SB-86 has been installed as the Black Baron Switchboard, and provides telephone service to 34 local subscribers and 8 common user trunks to other tributary or long distance switchboards.

Common user trunks are:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Cu Chi	1
Assistant Division Aviation Office	1
116th Assault Helicopter Company	1
187th Assault Helicopter Company	1
242nd Assault Support Helicopter Company	1

The Sole User telephone circuits between the Battalion Operations Center and the operations center of higher headquarters and each assigned company has been terminated in a SB-22. The installation of this system eliminates five telephones in the Battalion Operations Center, thereby providing telephones for installation elsewhere. A constant visual and audible signal exists on the switchboard until the call is answered. The new systems provide greater efficiency and flexibility.

2 Although not completed, Cu Chi Base Camp is presently being equipped with a new dial telephone system. This equipment is used in conjunction with the separate switchboards now in operation. This new equipment enhances telephonic communication not only at Cu Chi Base

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Camp but also in calling long distances. It is much more simple to operate, faster, and provides the user with a much better connection.

(2) SOI's are published by the Signal Officer, 12th Combat Aviation Group. Changes are published as they occur and made available to the Group Signal Officer. However, the Infantry Division normally does not notify Group of changes. Many problems have been created by having incorrect frequencies of supported units listed in the SOI. A possible solution would be for each aviation battalion to report all frequencies changed by units operating in its area immediately to 12th Group. A time delay of two or three days will be experienced before the published changes could be issued and entered into all SOI's. One hundred and ten SOI's are issued to Battalion Headquarters with 10 remaining here and twenty-five being issued to each assigned company.

(3) The Signal Detachment attached to the companies continue to progress and improve the maintenance facilities, and are providing excellent service to the aviation companies. Many defects within the avionics supply system have been corrected, thus making more readily available required maintenance items. The personnel strength of the detachments has improved; however, a shortage of qualified repairmen still exists.

(4) Crypto facilities are available only at the Battalion Headquarters. Crypto equipment is available for issue to the companies, and will be used in a Battalion secure FM net. Crypto accounts have been established in each company, with each appointed company Crypto

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Custodian reporting directly to the Battalion Crypto Custodian, in lieu of the local Crypto distributing agency in this area. On line Crypto facilities are not planned to the subordinate companies.

h. (U) Aviation Medicine.

(1) Treatment-Aid Station Operations. The 431st Medical Detachmont (OA) dispensary which became operational on 9 November 1966 continues to function well at Cu Chi, RVN. Two new dispensaries became operational during the last quarter of 1967. The 541st Medical Detachmont (OA) became operational on 14 December 1967. We are at the present time consolidating the 431st Medical Detachment and the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Surgeon's Office into one dispensary located in the 269th CAB, Headquarters' Company area to support all the units of the 269th CAB stations at Cu Chi. There will be at least 2 medics quartered in each company area for emergency medical care at night.

(2) Preventive Medicine and Immunization. Immunizations have been brought very near the 100% level throughout the Battalion. This has been accomplished by establishing a "shot" line at the pay line each payday, and has proved to be very effective. The weekly program of malaria chemoprophylaxis of USARV has been complied with. Venereal disease remains at a moderate level. A news-letter education program on VD and other preventive medicine subjects has been initiated by one of the Battalion Flight Surgeons. Aviator flying fatigue continues to be a significant problem. It is the opinion of the present incumbent of the Battalion Surgeon's Office that the total number of hours flown is not the significant factor in the control of fatigue. Aviator fatigue is dependent upon such factors as mission type, consecutive flying hours, hours waiting, and a period of rest. The aviator fatigue

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problem could be alleviated somewhat by adding a goal directed rest period with the control of the number of hours flown.

(3) Flight Physical Qualification. Annual physicals continue to be waived throughout USARV. Initial Class I & III flight physicals are accomplished on individuals entering flight status for the first time. The requirements for the initial Class I and III have recently been lowered therefore making more people available for the Flight Program. We can do the entire physical examination at Cu Chi now; whereas, in the past this was not true. The X-ray Laboratory examination and eye examination and audiometer tests are done at the 12th Evac Hospital. We are also having one man from each company trained in area sanitation by the Preventive Medicine Unit of the 25th Division.

(4) Medical Evacuation. Aeromedical evacuation continues to be the primary evacuation means of wounded personnel in this Battalion.

(5) Training. Airplane aid kits and individual survival kits are displayed in the operations of most companies of the Battalion. A monthly news-letter concerning preventive medicine concepts written for the men of the Battalion by one of the flight surgeons is being increased in the near future with each flight surgeon of the battalion going to each medical unit and giving instruction periods in medical subjects on a bi-monthly basis. All personnel are licensed ambulance drivers.

(6) Medical Supplies and Equipment. All standard, expendable medical supplies are readily available throughout either the 25th DMSO

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or the 32nd Medical Depot at Leng Binh. The Depot is programmed to consolidate supply requests through the Battalion Surgeon's office to cut down on needless travel to Leng Binh and facilitate distribution of the supplies throughout the Battalion.

(7) Sanitation. Each unit's medical support is still required to be responsible for the disposal of human waste. Supervision of Vietnamese Nationals who perform the labor is carried out by each medical detachment. All companies have been making improvements in their mess operations, latrines, urinals, drainago, and living quarters. Inspections are carried out monthly, informally and recommendations are made for continuous improvements.

(8) Public Health. Aviation personnel going on R&R or DEROs are checked to be free of communicable disease and issued chemoprophylactic malaria tablets. General procedures of public health are outlined by the Preventive Medicine Officer of the 25th Infantry Division.

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2. SECTION 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations (c)

a. Personnel: None

b. Operations:

(1) Use of Organic Flare Aircraft.

(a) OBSERVATION: An organic capability to dispense aircraft flares is required within the assault helicopter companies.

(b) EVALUATION: During a recon Battalion night combat assault a single USAF flare aircraft could not adequately cover the entire operational area with illumination. The three landing zones used for the first simultaneous lift were spread across an area approximately 3.5 KM long. The USAF aircraft could easily cover the area in his flight orbit but the time delay between flares was excessive for effective lighting. The employment of organic UH-1D aircraft to drop flares over each landing zone and supplement the Air Force flares proved extremely effective. The organic aircraft were easier to control and more responsive to small adjustments.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That all assault helicopter companies maintain a capability to dispense aircraft flares.

(2) Use of Flares Versus Attainment of Surprise in Night Combat Assaults.

(a) OBSERVATION: It has been noted that due to the time required to adjust flares over the proposed landing site prior to an insertion, the enemy forces are provided considerable warning of the impending landing.

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(b) EVALUATION: As in any combat operation, the attainment of the element of surprise in an airmobile assault contributes significantly to the swift accomplishment of the mission with minimum losses to friendly forces. This vital factor of surprise cannot be achieved if excessive time has elapsed between the dropping of the first flare and the landing of the first troop lift. While it would be more advantageous to land without any illumination, safety considerations eliminate this type assault on many occasions. To preclude this delay in adjustment of flares, the 269th has experimented with various methods of directing the aircraft for a first flare target hit. It has been found that if the pilot of the aircraft to drop the flares has seen the proposed LZ during daylight hours and has dropped one flare in an adjacent area to check wind drift that he will almost always be able to attain the correct illumination with the first round. If the pilot is not able to see the area prior to darkness, then he must be vectored over the drop point by the C&C aircraft. Here again it is advantageous for both the C&C and the flare aircraft to fly a parallel pattern and both observe the drop of one flare to check wind drift. Knowing the drift, the Air Mission Commander may select a drop point that will give him a reasonable assurance of proper illumination with the first flare.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the procedures discussed above be brought to the attention of all assault helicopter units.

(3) Flare Cannisters.

(a) OBSERVATION: When using the MK-24 aircraft flare, a danger exists from the falling cannister.

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(b) EVALUATION: When the canopy of the MK-24 flare is ejected from its cannister, the cannister free falls to the ground. This cannister is a metal tube approximately thirty-six inches long and weighs thirty-five pounds. If this cannister should fall through the rotor system of a helicopter below, it would probably cause the destruction of the aircraft and the loss of the crew. If the cannister could remain attached to the parachute it would present no hazard as the parachute can be seen and avoided. Another solution to this problem would be to develop a cannister of a brittle, lightweight material that would shatter upon impact with the turning rotor blades. While this may not completely eliminate blade damage, it would probably not destroy the aircraft.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That R and D investigate the possibility of affixing the MK-24 flare cannister to it's parachute or of developing a new material for the cannister that will easily break.

(4) Effectiveness of Helicopter Gunships in the Cordon Role During the Hours of Darkness.

(a) OBSERVATION: During a recent night airmobile assault, the mission of the infantry unit was to cordon and search a village complex. The village was attacked from three sides and the gunships were to maintain surveillance on the fourth side to prevent the enemy escape.

(b) EVALUATION: Despite the aircraft flares providing general illumination, there was insufficient light available to effectively seal off the village by surveillance alone. The many shadows created by the flare, and the periods of darkness between flares, allowed

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the enemy an opportunity to escape. The effectiveness of the gunships in this mission during darkness was marginal.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS:

1 That in future operations of this nature that an airborne searchlight (firefly) be employed to provide additional illumination when required.

2 That infantry unit commanders be advised of the marginal effectiveness of gunship combat at night.

(5) Emergency Disposal of Ignited Aircraft Flares.

(a) OBSERVATION: In a recent night operation involving this unit, a UH-1D was utilized for the purpose of dropping flares to provide illumination for the insertion of ground units. After several successful flares had been dropped, one accidentally ejected the canopy in the cargo compartment when the safety pin was pulled. A crewmember managed to throw the canister out before the flare itself ignited, however the shroud lines to the parachute became entangled on numerous parts of the aircraft and could not be removed during flight. The flare then ignited and swung underneath the aircraft where it could not be removed. The Aircraft Commander elected to land, but before doing so, he side-slipped the aircraft with a full right pedal allowing the flare to swing out away from the aircraft while the lines were cut.

(b) EVALUATION: The aircraft commander took the correct steps in preventing a fire from starting. It should be pointed out, that at the same time, he was attempting to land his aircraft in case

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of any further complications.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended in cases of this nature the aircraft should be flown out of trim in the same direction that the flare was dropped. If the flare is suspended from the right side, the aircraft should be flown with full right pedal, so that the flare will be pushed away from the aircraft. Also, the present survival knife being used by many units is not sharp enough to cut shroud lines. Instead, a standard shroud knife with hooked blade should be carried on each flare ship so as to expedite the cutting of those lines.

(6) Smoke Ship Orientation at Night.

(a) OBSERVATION: Proper orientation of the smoke ship is essential in night operations.

(b) EVALUATION: This unit utilizes a smoke ship to lay a column of smoke to mark the azimuth of landing as well as providing a screen for the flight on all night combat assaults. Unless the proposed LZ is clearly and distinctly defined, it is difficult for the pilot of the smoke ship to maintain the proper orientation for landing. It has been noted that in cases where the smoke ship pilot has observed the proposed LZ during daylight, little or no difficulty has been experienced in maintaining proper orientation.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the pilot of the smoke ship accompany the reconnaissance party when LZ's and flight routes are selected for night operations.

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(7) Rules of Engagement.

(a) OBSERVATION: Rules of engagement must be clearly defined prior to any combat assault.

(b) EVALUATION: During the conduct of a recent night assault, the rules of engagement were announced as: "Return fire if fired upon. Avoid firing into the village area." Upon departure from an LZ adjacent to the village that was to be searched, the troop lift helicopters began receiving fire from the village area. Because the enemy was using some tracer ammunition, the escort gunships were able to accurately pinpoint the sources of fire despite the darkness. The request to return the fire was denied by the Airmobile Task Force Commander because the fire was coming from the village. It was his desire to clear with higher headquarters prior to placing any fire in the village. Three additional lifts were put in the LZ and each received fire and hits upon departure while waiting for clearance to fire. When clearance was finally granted, the gunships quickly extinguished the source and no further fire was received by the lift aircraft. This delay caused the grounding of two aircraft as the result of the hits received.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the Airmobile Task Force Commander controlling the action be given authority to modify the rules of engagement as dictated by the current tactical situation.

(8) Control of Air Traffic in the Area of Airmobile Operations.

(a) OBSERVATION: On many airmobile combat assault operations, unscheduled or unannounced aircraft have entered the AG and interfered with the landing or extraction being accomplished.

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(b) EVALUATION: Often times medical evacuation, resupply, special mission or command and control aircraft will enter an area of operations without notifying the Air Mission Commander of their presence. One example of this was a medical evacuation helicopter, called in by the unit on the ground, utilizing that unit's internal FM Net for control. This aircraft approached the LZ at the same time as a lift of twenty helicopters. The same color smoke was thrown by the ground unit for the med-evac landing and dropped by the gunships for the landing of the lift ships. The approach path flown by the medevac crossed under the final approach of the lift formation. When the medevac under flew the flight it was seen by the Air Mission Commander for the first time and this was his first knowledge of its presence in the area. Another example was when a C&C aircraft from the supported unit's higher headquarters entered the AO and established an orbit above the air mission C&C and armed helicopter orbits. This aircraft did not check in with the Air Mission Commander or the Airmobile Task Force Commander. The first time it was known that he was in the area was when he began employing door gun against a suspected enemy location. The door gun was being fired through the orbits of four other aircraft. These extremely hazardous and potentially disastrous situations may only be prevented by prior planning and proper coordination with the supported unit. Prior to the start of any airmobile assault, it must be understood that any aircraft entering the AO will contact either the Air Mission or Airmobile Task Force Commander to announce his presence. If at all possible, those aircraft should be

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controlled by the Air Mission Commander on his UHF radio frequency. In this manner, all aircraft in the area of operations can be effectively controlled. In addition, the Air Mission Commander can help assure the success of any mission by providing armed escort, smoke screening, etc for the other air traffic.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the following information be disseminated to, and coordinated with, all Airmobile Task Force Commanders prior to commencing any airmobile operation: To insure absolute control of air traffic within the AO, all aircraft operating in support of the operation will contact either the Air Mission Commander on his UHF frequency or the Airmobile Task Force Commander on his command FM frequency prior to entering the area.

(9) Troops Disembarking From Aircraft Prior to Landing.

(a) OBSERVATION: Even in secure areas, some troops jump from landing helicopters prior to the actual touchdown of the aircraft causing an unstable aircraft and resultant dangerous situation.

(b) EVALUATION: When landing in an LZ that is under enemy fire, it is a generally accepted practice for the infantry to start exiting the aircraft prior to actual touchdown. This procedure provides for minimum exposure of aircraft to enemy fire. Under those conditions, the risk of an accident is acceptable. However, in secure landing areas, the risk is unnecessary. The resultant instability of the aircraft when troops disembark prior to landing has been a contributing factor in two accidents and several near accidents in this unit. In all cases the

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the area was secure and rapid exit was not warranted.

(a) RECOMMENDATION: That infantry unit commanders instruct their personnel not to leave the helicopters prior to actual landing unless the landing zone is under enemy fire.

(10) Troop Formations in Pick-Up Zones.

(a) OBSERVATION: On final extraction from pick-up zones, the troops and aircraft are vulnerable to enemy fire as no further security remains in the area.

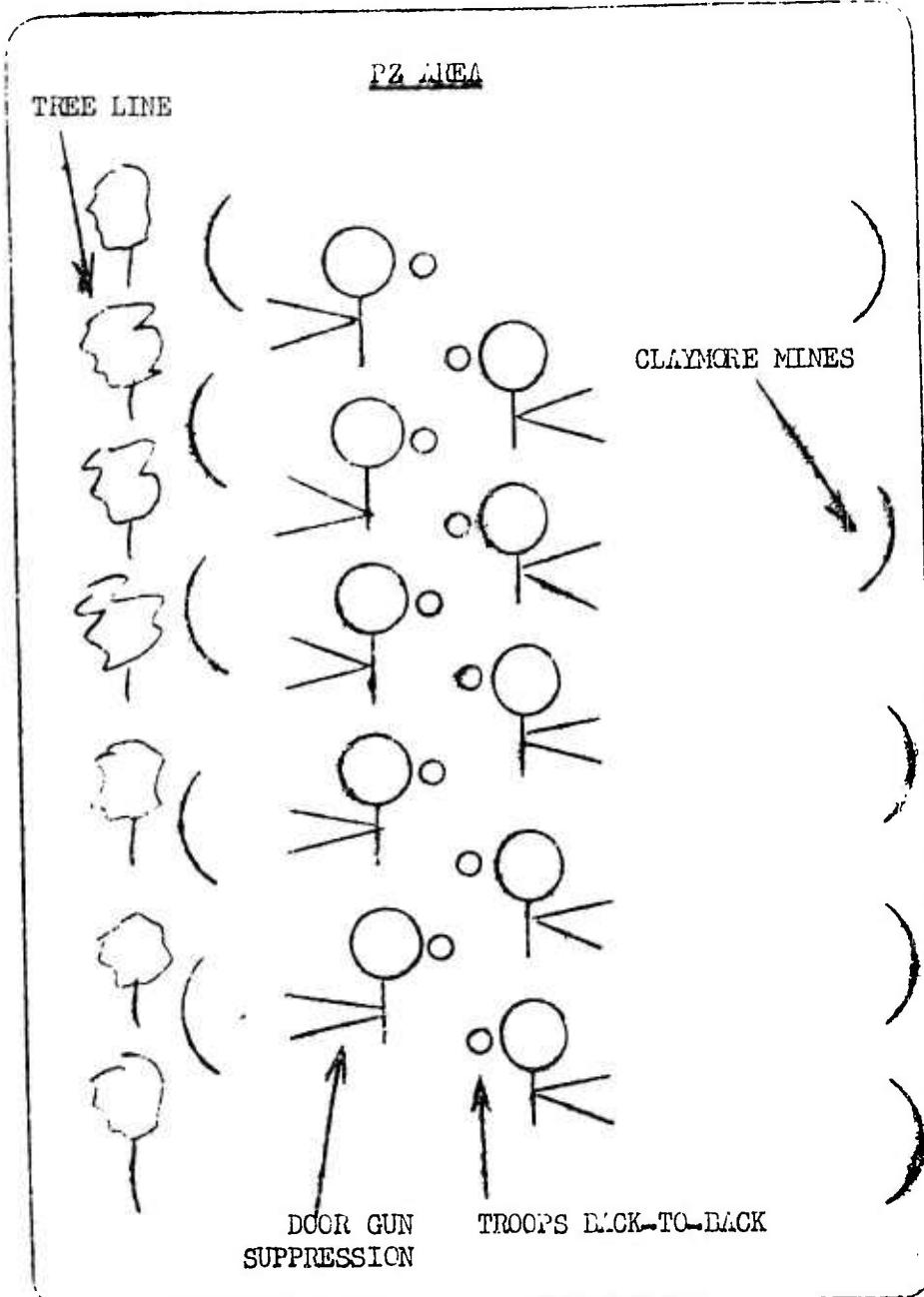
(b) EVALUATION: The normal procedure for pick-up of troops is for the aircraft to land inside the lines of troops. This procedure prohibits door gunners from firing as troops load the aircraft. This unit has developed pick-up procedures with units of the 25th Infantry Division that overcome some of the limitations of the normal pick-up. On final extraction from potentially hot PZs, the infantry unit emplaces claymore mines around the PZ and lines up for extraction in a back-to-back fashion as shown in the sketch below. When the lift aircraft are on final approach to the PZ, the infantry unit detonates the claymore mines on command from the airmobile task force commander. The aircraft then land on the outside of the loads, load, and depart the PZ with full suppressive fires by the outside door gunners. It is believed that this method of extraction has prevented enemy fire on many occasions availing the possible loss of both men and aircraft.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That Air Mission and Air Mobile Task Force Commanders explore the method of extraction as described above.

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SKETCH to (10) Troop Formations in Pick-Up Zones.



(11) Damage to CH-47 Ramp Extentions.

(a) OBSERVATION: CH-47 Chinook helicopter ramp extention
are being damaged while internally loading 3/4 ton trucks.

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(b) EVALUATION: The ramp extention on the CH-47 are folding platforms on the rear of the ramp and are designed to allow vehicles or cargo to be driven or rolled into the helicopter. On several occasions these extention have been broken or damaged because of over-loaded vehicles and unsatisfactory terrain where stumps, ditches and holes exist. The weight of the vehicle applying uneven pressure on the ramp extention causes the damage.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: In view of the above plus the lost time in loading and unloading and the certainty of a forced landing in the event of an engine failure, it is recommended that whenever possible, 3/4 ton trucks be rigged for extermal sling load.

(12) Utilizing CH-47 Door Gunners in Lifting Piggy-Back Loads.

(a) OBSERVATION: Door gunners may assist greatly in picking up piggy-back loads.

(b) EVALUATION: Many times when picking up piggy-back loads, the CH-47 crew chief is unable to see the lower load after the upper load has been lifted. As the upper load leaves the ground, the door gunner, who has a clear view of the lower load should direct the pilot for the pick-up.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the technique discussed above be brought to the attention of all CH-47 operators.

(13) Unit Integrity in CH-47 Operations.

(a) OBSERVATION: On several occasions CH-47 aircraft from two different units have been employed on a single tactical artillery

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displacement while, at the same time, resupply missions were also divided between the same units.

(b) EVALUATION: The maintenance of unit integrity will always result in a more efficient and well organized operation. When portions of two helicopter units participate in the same lift and unit locations prohibit a thorough, combined pre-mission briefing, unnecessary confusion, excess radio traffic, and poor coordination result. These factors further result in a delay in mission accomplishment. An example of this lack of proper coordination was when, at mid-day, two CH-47 aircraft of the 242nd ASHC and two CH-47 aircraft from the 205th ASHC were given the mission to displace an artillery battery. At the same time two more aircraft each from these same units were to conduct other resupply missions. All coordination was accomplished over the radios as there was not sufficient time for ground coordination between aircraft commanders and the ground unit.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the mission to displace a tactical unit be assigned to a single assault support helicopter company.

(14) External Transport of Water Trailers by CH-47.

(a) OBSERVATION: Some units have been using the eight foot cargo sling in rigging water trailers for external loads.

(b) EVALUATION: The eight foot sling does not allow enough freedom of movement for the water trailer and results in the trailer striking the underside of the aircraft. This causes damage to both the aircraft and the trailer.

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(c) RECOMMENDATION: That units utilize only the ten or fifteen foot sling when rigging water trailers for external transport by CH-47 aircraft.

c. Training.

(1) Infantry Orientation for Armed Helicopter Commanders.

(a) OBSERVATION: Armed helicopter pilots, and in particular, those pilots in command positions must be thoroughly familiar with infantry operations.

(b) EVALUATION: In order to better support the infantry unit on the ground, armed helicopter pilots from this organization have participated in actual combat operations with infantry units of the 25th Infantry Division. Each aviator undergoing this training spends approximately seven days in the field with an infantry platoon. While in the field, the aviator has the opportunity to "See How The Other Shoe Fits" and observe how the units operate, the problems of control, how they expect fire support to assist them, etc. They have the opportunity to direct gunship support from the ground to understand what problems the infantry commander is experiencing. Comments from individual aviators participating in this program indicate that the training is an invaluable aid in understanding the operations of the units they support.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That commanders in armed helicopter platoons be encouraged to participate in infantry operations on a voluntary basis.

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(2) Replacement Training.

(a) OBSERVATION: Initial in-country orientation and refresher training for replacement EM can be unduly burdensome on helicopter companies.

(b) EVALUATION: A large amount of time is expended by some helicopter units in training and orientation of newly arrived enlisted personnel. Because of the shortage of training facilities, equipment and personnel, this unit has arranged with the 25th Infantry Division to have replacements attend the Division replacement school. In this school, the replacements receive all the required briefings, refresher training and orientations required. In addition, they attend the Division's Infantry Operations Training and the Mines, Booby-Traps and Tunnel School.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That Non-Divisional aviation units send replacement personnel through the replacement training center of their supported Division.

d. Intelligence: None

e. Logistics.

(1) Dropped Loads as a Result of Faulty Slings and Poor Rigging Procedures.

(a) OBSERVATION: It has become apparent that a large number of dropped loads are the direct result of faulty slings or poor rigging procedures.

(b) EVALUATION: It is an established procedure within

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this Battalion for aircraft commanders and crew chiefs to visually inspect the loads prior to hook up for proper rigging. However, because of the inability to land the helicopter and take the time necessary for a ground inspection, this visual inspection from the aircraft leaves much to be desired. In addition to the aircrew inspection, Battalion Pathfinders periodically check loads in the resupply area. When a faulty load is discovered, a report is forwarded to the applicable ground unit S-4.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That ground unit commanders be encouraged to utilize the training facilities of the supporting aviation battalion Pathfinder Detachment to conduct formal rigging training as often as necessary to preclude dropped loads as a result of improper rigging.

(2) Corrosion of Antenna Lead-In Plugs.

(a) OBSERVATION: The corrosion of antenna lead plugs will render aircraft radios inoperable.

(b) EVALUATION: On several occasions, numerous man hours have been expended changing radios and control panels in an attempt to solve aircraft communication difficulties. Further trouble-shooting revealed the fact that the only difficulty was corroded antenna lead plugs. Upon thorough cleaning of the plugs, radio communications were reestablished without difficulty.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That signal detachments be advised of the difficulties found and corrective actions utilized by this unit.

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(3) Padding in APH-6 Flight Helmets.

(a) OBSERVATION: The new padding issued with the APH-6 helmet does not adhere to the shock liner.

(b) EVALUATION: During repair of the flight helmet, it is common to have difficulties getting the new padding (FSN Series 8115-933-9283, 84, 85) to adhere to the shock liner. It was found that after a thorough cleaning of the liner with alcohol and insuring that the liner was completely dry, the padding would adhere fairly satisfactorily. The old type padding issued for use with the APH-5 helmet sticks to the liner with no difficulty.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the same adhesive that was used on the APH-5 padding be used on the APH-6 padding. That units in the field use the APH-5 padding if available. That prior to inserting the new padding, the helmet shock liner be thoroughly cleaned with alcohol.

(4) Vehicle Brake Shoes.

(a) OBSERVATION: During the wet season, an excessive number of vehicle brake shoes need to be repaired.

(b) EVALUATION: With the onset of the rainy season, a large amount of water and mud enters the brake drums of all types of vehicles. When brakes are applied, the heat generated by this action dries the mud which then cakes on the drums. The subsequent abrasive effect of the grit in the mud causes excessive wear of brake shoes. The only apparent corrective action is to clean brake drums daily which is a rather difficult task when considering the number of vehicles used.

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and maintenance personnel available.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That R and D explore a system of sealing; brake drums against the ingestion of mud and water. That Depots anticipate the increased usage of brake shoes during the wet season and prestock applicable numbers of replacements parts.

f. Organization: None

g. Other.

(1) Oral Penicillin Therapy.

(a) OBSERVATION: Many of the acute infectious diseases seen in an outpatient facility are treated with oral penicillin.

(b) EVALUATION: Most of the infections are treated with oral forms of penicillin because of patient convenience and a lessened risk of anaphylaxis. However, the use of oral therapy increases the risk of inadequate therapy and the attendant dangers of Rheumatic Fever and Glomerulonephritis since many patients voluntarily discontinue medication as soon as acute symptoms have abated. It is imperative that the importance of complete compliance with instructions be stressed to anyone placed on oral penicillin therapy. This risk can be obviated in all cases by using Dicillin A-P, available in the federal formulary. Therapy initiated with an intramuscular injection of 1,200,000 units of Dicillin A-P provides aqueous and procaine penicillin fractions which produce a high initial blood level of the drug. Also enough benzathine penicillin is supplied to provide adequate blood levels to complete the usual 10 day course of therapy. Oral penicillin given

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simultaneously provides sufficiently high blood levels during the acute phase of the disease. Thus, if the patient voluntarily discontinues his oral therapy, he remains protected by the benzathine penicillin.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the information discussed above be disseminated to medical detachment commanders.

(2) Adjunctive Therapy in the Treatment of Tinea Pedis.

(a) OBSERVATION: Tinea Pedis is a constant problem in the hot wet environment of Vietnam.

(b) EVALUATION: Many of the long standing cases of Tinea Pedis have become complicated by secondary bacterial infection. The use of undecylenic powder alone has proved to be ineffective in the treatment of this condition. The results of therapy can be greatly improved by the addition of undecylenic cream or liquid to the therapeutic regimen. In cases with secondary infection, the use of systemic and/or local antibiotics is often necessary. Tinactin or Crestatin are two other antifungal that are effective in the treatment of this disorder.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: The use of adjunctive therapy in the treatment of Tinea Pedis aids greatly in the resolution of this problem. Various antifungal agents are available for use in conjunction with undecylenic powder. In some cases antibacterial agents may be necessary. Furthermore, the affected area should be dried thoroughly after showering and exposed to the air for regular periods each day.

(3) Prevention of External Ear Infection.

(a) OBSERVATION: Many flight personnel have experienced

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the discomfort of otitis externa. Most of which prove to be mixed fungal and bacterial origin.

(b) EVALUATION: It is well known that fungus thrives in a damp dark environment. The ear canal fulfills each of these requirements. Many of those infections can be prevented with proper care and precautions. Clean, dry ear canals and ear plugs will aid in preventing acute otitis externa. Many of these infections can be prevented by drying the ears thoroughly after showering and by using clean ear plugs. Periodically dispensary personnel should flush the ear canal to remove wax and other debris that may block off the canal, setting the stage for infection. After flushing the canal, alcohol should be used to help dry it out. Also, periodically clean the ear plugs with alcohol.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the information discussed above be brought to the attention of all aviation personnel and medical detachments.



DELYLE G. REDMOND

LTC, Infantry
Commanding

- 5 Inclusions Withdrawn, DA
1. ~~The 269th CAB~~
2. Unit Strength as 31 July 68
3. Summary of Gains and Losses
for Next 90 Days
4. Aircraft Status
5. Operational Statistics

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AMMO (1 August 1972) 1st Ind
Squadron operating the AH-64 Apache
Period ending 31 July 1972 (MS 5000-100, 100)

2. In accordance with the 1st Aviation Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division
regarding the 1st Cavalry Division, Vietnam, AFM 100-200, 100-200
1. 1st Cavalry Division, 100-200
2. 1st Cavalry Division, 100-200
3. 1st Cavalry Division, 100-200

1. In compliance with R 525-5 and USARV Regulation 5.5-1, the following series of subject report are forwarded.

2. This Headquarters has reviewed subject report and the following comments are made:

a. Reference para 25, item f (3) - The 109th Combat Aviation Brigade has been designated to 1st Aviation Brigade as the priority target (3) unit to receive the remainder of their authorized AH-64 helicopters as they become available for issue. This priority was made on the basis of unit vulnerability as a result of analysis of aircraft hit reports and combat casualty levels.

b. Reference Inclosure 4, Aircraft Status - Aircraft authorized for HHC are corrected as follows: 109th 3 OH-6A, 2 U-6A, 2 U-12/H, and 0 CH-47.

3. Concur with all other comments and recommendations.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Robert A. Witzier
ROBERT A. WITZIER
Major, Armor
Asst Adjutant

AVABU-RL-8 (1 Aug 68) 2nd Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion
for the Period Ending 31 July 1968

DA, HQ II FORCEN, APO San Francisco 96266 5 SEP 1968

FROM: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVB-1-C, APO 96507

Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVNCC-DH, APO 96575

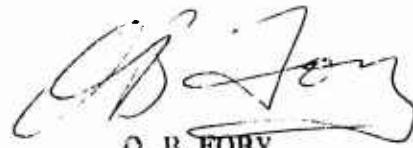
Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: CINCPAC, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Subject report is forwarded.

2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with the Operational Report-
Lessons Learned of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion for the period ending
31 July 1968, as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


O. B. FORY
1LT, AGC
Asst AG

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AVN-C (1 Aug 68) 3d Ind

SUBJ: Operational Report of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion for the Period Ending 31 July 1968 (U)

DA, HEAD, ARTERS, 1LT AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384 SEP 14 1968

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVN-C-3D, APO 96375
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GROUP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed this report, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents as indorsed.

2. (C) The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Paragraph 1f(3), page 25 and paragraph 2a, 1st Indorsement. Ballistic helmets are command controlled items. A list of shortages on ballistic helmets has been furnished USARV-AVN. Issues to groups are made as the helmets arrive in country. 500 large size helmets were allocated to the 1st Aviation Brigade from a shipment which arrived in country on or about 20 August 1968. It was determined that these helmets were too large even with the thickest pads for personnel to wear. These helmets are being held pending receipt of disposition instructions from JSARV.

b. Paragraph 1f(4), page 26. A command letter requesting upgrade of the 116th Assault Helicopter Company project to 1st priority was submitted to USARV-LIAGR recently. Latest reports from the 20th Engineer Brigade show the 116th Rotary Wing parking area as being 93% complete with an estimated completion date of 10 October 1968.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


J. D. SEGAL
1LT, AGC
ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL

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**DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10**

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Attachment (1) (a); (2) 1st Ind (1) MAD 111100/DC/
2d QTR: Operational report of the 26th Combat Aviation Battalion
for the period ending 31 July 1968

U.S. ARMY, UNIT 2 AFM 3447, AFMAN, AFMAN-Pacific, C/17 1 NOV 1968

To: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, AFM: C/17, AFMAN-Pacific
16550

1. (a) This Headquarters has reviewed the operational report issued by
Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1968 from the Headquarters,
26th Combat Aviation Battalion.

2. (b) Comments follow:

a. ~~Reference item concerning padding in AH-1 flight helmets, page 11,~~ paragraph 2g(2): Nonconcur. The substitution of pads and adhesive from
the older helmet will not correct the discrepancies noted for the new
equipment. The unit has been notified to submit an Equipment Improvement
Recommendation outlining the inadequacies of the items furnished with the
AFH-6.

b. Reference item concerning Oral Penicillin Therapy, page 51, para-
graph 2g(1): Concur. This information will be disseminated by the USARV
Medical Consultant.

c. ~~Reference item concerning adjunctive therapy in the treatment of~~ tinea pedis, page 52, paragraph 2g(2): Concur. This information will be
disseminated by the USARV Medical Consultant.

d. Reference item concerning prevention of external ear infection,
page 52, paragraph 2g(3): Concur. This information will be disseminated
by the USARV Medical Consultant.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

W.C. Arntz
W. C. ARNTZ
CPT AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Avn Bde
HQ 26th CAB

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GPOP-DT (1 Aug 68) 5th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 269th Cbt Avn Bn for Period
Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 19 DEC 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding
endorsements and concurs in the report, as indicated, except as
indicated in the following paragraph.

2. Reference paragraph 2b, 1st Endorsement and Inclosure 4, was.
The correct aircraft authorization for the HHC, Combat Aviation
Battalion is 3 LOH (QH6A, QH23, QH13) aircraft, per MTOE 1-256G.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

Oliver L. Shortt

C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

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13. ABSTRACT		

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Security Classification

The following items are recommended for inclusion in the Lessons Learned Index:

ITEM 1

* SUBJECT TITLE _____

** FOR OT RD # _____

***PAGE # _____

ITEM 2

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

ITEM 3

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

ITEM 4

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

ITEM 5

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

* Subject Title: A short (one sentence or phrase) description of the item of interest.

** FOR OT RD # : Appears in the Reply Reference line of the Letter of Transmittal. This number must be accurately stated.

***Page # : That page on which the item of interest is located.

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